

## Resources

US Department of Education  
[www.edc.org/hec](http://www.edc.org/hec)

US Department of Health & Human Services  
[www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov)

College Parents of America  
[www.collegeparents.org](http://www.collegeparents.org)

College Drinking...Changing the Culture  
[www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov](http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov)

MyStudentBody.com  
[www.mystudentbody.com](http://www.mystudentbody.com)

College Alcohol Study  
[www.hsph.harvard.edu/cas](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/cas)

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse & Alcoholism  
[www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov)

Maritime Consortium  
[www.drugfreevessel.com](http://www.drugfreevessel.com)

## Recommended Reading

“Smashed: Story of a Drunken Girlhood” by Koren Zailckas

“Buzzed: The Straight Facts about the Most Used and Abused Drugs from Alcohol to Ecstasy” by Cynthia Kuhn, Scott Swartzwelder, Wilke Wilson, Leigh Wilson & Jeremy Foster

## Acknowledgements

Colleges of Worcester Consortium, Inc. “A Message to Parents”

Boston College Office of Alcohol & Drug Education  
Parent Resource Guide

The Network Addressing Collegiate Alcohol & Other Drug Issues  
A Parents Guide to Alcohol, Drinking & Choosing a College

College Parents of America Health & Safety Fact Sheet: Alcohol

## MASSACHUSETTS MARITIME ACADEMY



*A Parent's Guide:  
Keeping Your  
Cadet  
Alcohol Free*

*Parents do  
make a  
difference...*



## MMA Parents Association



## *The Parents....*

Communication and involvement play a vital role in the success of your cadet's college education. For many parents, talking about alcohol is not easy. It may be uncomfortable, and you may be unsure of what to say or when and how to begin. Your son or daughter may try to dodge the discussion. Although ultimately your son or daughter will make his or her own choice about alcohol use, studies show that parents remain a significant influence on college students<sup>1</sup>. Below are suggestions to help raise the topic of alcohol use with your cadet.

### **Make your expectations clear**

- College is a huge investment of time and money.
- Set clear expectations that your cadet will focus on his/her academic work and maintain reasonable balance between social life and homework.

### **Underage alcohol consumption is illegal**

- Make it clear that you do not condone breaking the law.
- Alcohol-impaired driving no matter what the age is dangerous many times resulting in death or permanently disabling themselves, their passengers or innocent victims.

### **Alcohol is a drug**

- Do not discount the dangers of drinking compared to the use of other drugs.
- Discuss how peer influence may affect decisions.
- Discuss how your cadet will make his/her decisions about using alcohol when traveling outside the United States.
- Support your underage cadet in his/her efforts to not drink or 21-year old to drink sensibly.
- Work together to agree upon reasonable limitations and develop a plan for safety of self and others.
- Discuss what they will do if they attend a party where only alcohol beverages are available.

### **Emphasize the serious consequences**

- Discourage dangerous drinking and drinking games.
- Ask them if they understand what is binge drinking.
- Encourage your cadet to socialize without alcohol.
- Your opinion and guidance can make a difference.

### **Encourage your cadet to get involved in Academy life**

- Encourage involvement in other aspects of campus life.
- Get involved in student organizations or team sports.
- Encourage your cadet to get help when a classmate or friend is in trouble with alcohol.
- Encourage your son or daughter to watch out for his or her peers who may be engaged in dangerous drinking.



<sup>1</sup> Higher Education Center for Alcohol & Other Drug Prevention  
([www.edc.org/hec/Parens/8points.html](http://www.edc.org/hec/Parens/8points.html))

## ***The Facts...***

According to Acting Surgeon General Kenneth Moritsugu, MD, MPH, “Too many Americans consider underage drinking a rite of passage to adulthood. Research shows that young people who start drinking before the age of 15 are five times more likely to have alcohol-related problems later in life...research indicates alcohol harms the developing adolescent brain...each year, more than 5,000 deaths of people under age 21 are linked to underage drinking. Underage drinking is everybody’s problem – and its solution is everyone’s responsibility.”

- 1,400 college students between the ages of 18 and 24 die each year from alcohol-related unintentional injuries, including vehicle crashes
- 2.1 million students between the ages of 18 and 24 drive under the influence of alcohol each year
- 500,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are unintentionally injured under the influence of alcohol
- About 25% of college students report academic consequences of their drinking including missing class, falling behind, doing poorly on exams or papers and receiving lower grades overall
- Binge drinking for men is 5 or more drinks in a row; men are more likely than women to drink in ways that are harmful
- Binge drinking for women is 4 or more drinks in a row
- 9 out of 10 college students experiment with alcohol; 7 out of 10 drink regularly; 3 out 10 will become problem drinkers; one-fifth of 18 year old males become binge drinkers

***Every year our cadets embark on a SeaTerm learning experience that brings them to far-away places. The drinking age in the United States is 21; in SeaTerm ports the drinking age is 18 or younger or there may be no laws governing alcohol consumption.***

***It’s not that young people drink, but the way in which they consume alcohol can endanger their well-being and the well-being of their shipmates. Annual SeaTerm alcohol-related violations result in some cadets being sent home. Upwards of 20 parental notifications mailed home. Suspensions and expulsions have occurred.***

***Parents have a duty and responsibility to help prepare their cadet for this educational voyage by making them aware of the deadly lure of alcohol-induced euphoria. The consequences of bad decisions can be personally heartbreaking and financially devastating.***

## ***In Closing...***

A much-anticipated day of your child’s life has finally arrived. The first year of college is an exciting time for cadets as they begin to shape their career directions, gain long-lasting friendships, and become familiar with college and regiment life. Keep an open dialogue with your cadet. Establish a set time to call your son or daughter to provide the moral support they may need and to stay informed of their activities.

Studies show that parents are children’s single greatest influence on establishing a strong foundation for making healthy decisions. “A parent’s ability to influence whether their children drink is well documented. Setting clear rules against drinking, consistently enforcing those rules, and monitoring the child’s behavior all help to reduce the likelihood of underage drinking.<sup>2</sup>”

Be aware of signs of possible alcohol abuse by your son or daughter: never available to talk or unwilling to talk about activities with friends; mood swings or feeling withdrawn; sometimes hostile, uncooperative or unpredictable behavior. Seek help if you believe your son or daughter is having a problem with alcohol. Contact the Academy’s Health Services Office for appropriate referrals.

Massachusetts Maritime Academy has a zero-tolerance alcohol policy which states “Students who are not of legal drinking age may not purchase, transport, personally carry, store, or consume alcoholic beverages.” The Academy and parents recognize that the majority of cadets make responsible decisions about alcohol. If you’ve begun the dialogue, this packet will help to reinforce what you have been teaching. If not, we encourage you to begin your discussions. It’s never too late to start talking with your cadet about the consequences of alcohol abuse and underage drinking. You do make a difference in your child’s life at any age.

MMA Parents Association

*Special thanks to the members of the Academy community: CDR Anne Fredrickson, Director Health Services, LT Nancielee Holbrook, 6<sup>th</sup> Co, Greg Perry & Greg Folino, Athletic Dept., Ann Prete, Pam Pollock, and Karen White, Parents Association; to CAPT Allen Hansen, VP Student Services, for bringing us all together, and to Wendie Howland & Sandra Parker for their editorial review.*

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<sup>2</sup> Alcohol Alert #67, US Dept. of Health & Human Services, January 2006

## *The Academy...*

### **Health Services**

- Cadets have access to educational health pamphlets including alcohol, drugs, stress management, healthy lifestyle choices, and date safety, just to name a few.
- Health services staff available for confidential consultation.
- On campus mental health and substance abuse counselors in Health Services available to cadets. All consultations are completely confidential.
- Health services staff sponsor educational seminars, guest speakers and informational materials about alcohol during October (Alcohol Awareness Month) and throughout the year.
- Alcohol education seminars for cadets conducted just prior to Sea Term.
- Meet the staff: CDR Anne Fredrickson, APRN-BC, MS, Director; Patricia Laffan, RN-BC, CEDNEP; Kathleen Shine-O'Brien, MA; Lily Williams, BA, Office Manager.
- Hours of Operation & Location: M-F 0800-1200/1330-1600; 4<sup>th</sup> Co.
- Contact: 508-830-5048 (afredrickson@maritime.edu) (after hours contact public safety at 508-830-5000 x1025).

### **Regiment**

- Training and Retention Officers and Training and Retention Assistants completed Peer Certification Alcohol Education Training.
- BACCHUS members to receive Peer Certification Alcohol Education.
- All 4/c attend 2-hour alcohol education session during orientation.
- All 4/c must complete the self-administered MyStudentBody.com Alcohol program as a requirement for Cadet Recognition.
- An “underclassmen only” recreation room in 1<sup>st</sup> company/1<sup>st</sup> floor open 7 days/week; serves soft drinks and munchies; equipped with ping pong, pool tables, PlayStation, Xbox; movies Friday night.
- Company Officers on duty 24/7 to assist cadets.

### **Athletic Department**

- Conditioning room open to all cadets 7 days per week.
- All cadets are encouraged to participate in a varsity or intramural sport.
- All athletes are instructed on nutrition and performance programs.
- All athletes are counseled on the use of performance enhancement drugs.
- NCAA requires drug testing on all athletes.

## *The Mission....*

### **The mission of Massachusetts Maritime Academy**

... is to graduate educated men and women to serve the maritime industry as licensed officers or to serve the transportation, engineering, environmental, and industrial interests of the Commonwealth and the Nation.

The Academy supports the national defense by the commissioning of officers in the U.S. Merchant Marine and the U.S. Armed Forces. The Academy believes in learning through application and requires students to spend a portion of their academic program at sea or in internships or cooperatives. Resident life is regimented, instilling in cadets honor, responsibility, discipline and leadership.

A complementary mission is to provide lifelong learning opportunities, particularly for those in marine industries and to serve the Commonwealth and region in furthering its maritime interests.

MMA Board of Trustees, May, 1998

### **The mission of the MMA Parents Association**

... is to provide information and support to families of regimental cadets at MMA. We do this by promoting and facilitating communication between parents and with the Academy, sharing information resources, and raising funds for scholarships. Membership and full participation are open to any interested family member, former cadets and family, and MMA staff. There are no other requirements.

Wendie Howland, President, MMAPA 2003-2005

### **The MMA Parents Association provides these resources**

... to educate parents on the abuses of alcohol and mind altering drugs and the effects they have on cadet interpersonal behavior, health and well-being.

*Together with the support of the Academy community, we can prepare our cadets to lead healthy productive lives.*